When flesh is cheap and females dear[2],
And lusty lads roam here and there,
So merrily,
And ever among so merrily[3].

FAL. There's a merry heart!—Good master Silence, I'll give you a health for that anon.

SHAL. Give master Bardolph some wine, Davy.

DAVY. Sweet sir, sit; *[Seating BARDOLPH and the Page at another table.]* I'll be with you anon:—most sweet sir, sit. Master page, good master page, sit: preface[4]! What you want in meat, we'll

[a] *—and females dear,* &c.] This very natural character of Justice Silence is not sufficiently observed. He would scarcely speak a word before, and now there is no possibility of stopping his mouth. He has a *catch* for every occasion: "When flesh is *cheap* and females *dear*" Here the double sense of the word flfearmust be remembered.

FARMER.

3 *And* EVER AMONG *so merrily.*] *Ever among* is used by Chaucer in The Romaunt of the Rose:

"*Ever among* (sothly to saine)
"I suffre noie and mochil paine."

FARMER.

Of the phrase—ever among, I find an example in the old MS. romance of The Sowdon of Babylovne:

"Thai eten and dronken right inowe,
"And made myrth *ever among*:
"But of the Sowdon speke we nowe
"Howe of sorowe was his sonne."

It is observable that this phrase, in both instances, is applied to the purpose of festivity.

STEEVENS.

It occurs in the Not-browne Mayd:

"Be it right or wrong, these men among,
"On women do complain."

Which Dr. Farmer proposed, erroneously, I think, to correct—

"*This* men among," supposing it a Latinism. See Percy's Reliques, vol. ii. p. 28, edit. 1794. So, Turbervile's Tragical Tales, p. 132, where it is certainly not applied to the purpose of festivity:

"And *whipt* him now and then *among*."

BOSWELL.

4—preface!] Italian, from *profacia*; that is, much good may it do you.

HANMER.

Sir Thomas Hanmer (says Dr. Farmer) is right, yet it is no argument for his author's Italian knowledge.

Old Heywood, the epigrammatist, addressed his readers long Before;